

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 387 425

SO 025 372

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TITLE Folklore and Folklife: Teachers Manual.
INSTITUTION Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. Folklife Program.
PUB DATE [80]
NOTE 48p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Cultural Education; Elementary Secondary Education; Family History; *Folk Culture; Interviews; *Local History; *Oral History; *Oral Tradition; Primary Sources; Social Environment; *Social History; Social Studies

ABSTRACT

This manual provides a general introduction to folklore and folklife. Certain articles herein may be used in a basic activity-oriented approach to the study of folklore, beginning at the fourth grade level. Other articles proved a more in-depth study of folklife and of the means by which folk culture is preserved and shared. The teacher must determine which materials are appropriate for age and ability groups. Some activities describe rather sophisticated projects for students. The table of contents contains the following: (1) "Editor's Note" (John Ball); (2) "Introduction to Teachers Manual" (Ralph Rinzler); (3) "Introduction to Folklore" (Susan Kalcik); (4) "Introduction to Folk Music" (Thomas Vennum); (5) "Occupational Folklife" (Peter Seitel); (6) "Family Folklore" (Steven Zeitlin; Ann Bay; Amy Kotkin; Holly Cutting-Baker); (7) "Children's Folklife" (Kate Rinzler); (8) "Folklore in Your Own Community" (Jack Santino); (9) "Ethnic Folklore" (Susan Kalcik); (10) "Material Folklife" (Henry Glassie); and (11) "Festivals and Folk Festivals" (Susan Kalcik). (EH)

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FOLKLORE AND FOLKLIFE: TEACHERS MANUAL

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Edited by John Ball

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CONTENTS

EDITOR'S NOTE John Ball	1
INTRODUCTION TO TEACHERS MANUAL Ralph Rinzler	2
INTRODUCTION TO FOLKLORE Susan Kalčík	3
INTRODUCTION TO FOLK MUSIC Thomas Vennum	6
OCCUPATIONAL FOLKLIFE Peter Seitel	9
FAMILY FOLKLORE Steven Zeitlin, Ann Bay, Amy Kotkin, Holly Cutting-Baker	13
CHILDREN'S FOLKLIFE Kate Rinzler	17
FOLKLORE IN YOUR OWN COMMUNITY Jack Santino	23
ETHNIC FOLKLORE Susan Kalčík	27
MATERIAL FOLKLIFE Henry Glassie	34
FESTIVALS AND FOLK FESTIVALS Susan Kalčík	38

EDITOR'S NOTE

These materials will serve as a general introduction to folklore and folklife. Certain articles found herein may be used in a basic activity-oriented approach to the study of folklore (i.e. FAMILY FOLKLORE, CHILDREN'S FOLKLIFE), beginning at the fourth grade level. Other articles can be used for a more in-depth study of folklife and of the means by which folk culture is preserved and shared (i.e. FESTIVALS AND FOLK FESTIVALS). We suggest that you read each article carefully and decide which ones are most appropriate for your students. The activities described in MATERIAL CULTURE and in FESTIVALS AND FOLK FESTIVALS are rather sophisticated projects which should be undertaken by students at higher levels who have been well grounded in the subject. Student springboards may be reproduced in sufficient quantity for individual student use.

John Ball
Loudoun County Public Schools
Leesburg, Virginia

INTRODUCTION TO TEACHERS MANUAL

The short essays collected here are intended to help teachers prepare their pupils to profit from the experience of the Festival of American Folklife. The Festival celebrates many glittering facets of our American cultural identity. It is very often a joyous event: colorful, sometimes even raucous, the Festival may overwhelm the senses of an unprepared school-age child. He or she may become caught up in the whirl of sights, sounds, smells, and tastes and may lose the opportunity to exercise his or her understanding. We hope that the enclosed outlines and suggestions for classroom activities will help you to enable your students to penetrate to the underlying meaning of Festival presentations. Other resources that will aid you in this endeavor are the Festival program book, signs and printed panels at the Festival, and questions asked of Festival performers and staff. We urge you to use the Festival as an educational resource to the fullest extent possible.

In a general sense, the central educational message of the Festival is that living people are our exceptionally important cultural resources; they offer knowledge of skills, styles of performance, perspectives on living which enrich our lives and deepen our understanding of American society. The products of their knowledge and deeds are to be studied and cherished by educational institutions like schools and museums. In the collective and for the most part unrecorded traditions of the American people, as well as in the recorded wisdom of books, lies our cultural heritage. These are the tools we need to live in the present and face the future.

This guide was prepared as an experiment in the hope that it would help you and your students to use the Festival more efficiently as the important educational resource we know it to be.

If you have any questions or comments on the collection of essays please do not hesitate to contact us. We would be very grateful if you would share with us your experiences in using the guide.

Ralph Rinzler
Director
Folklife Program

INTRODUCTION TO FOLKLORE

by Susan Kalčík

In everyday conversation the term, "folklore", is often used to mean something that is untrue. Another common definition is that folklore is practiced by primitive, isolated, superstitious people. For the purposes of studying folklore however, we must turn to the scholarly definition of the term.

Folklore is one kind of culture that groups of people have. Culture is the sum total of the ways of living built up by a group of human beings, a total which is transmitted from one generation to another. A group's culture can include classical traditions and popular culture. It can also include folklore or folk culture which is the "informal expressive traditions shared by members of close groups" (Barre Toelken, past president, American Folklore Society). This close group is a folk group and it is characterized by a face-to-face interaction.

The folk process by which members of such a group learn and pass on traditions, customs, beliefs, ways of doing things is mainly by observing, talking and listening. All of us probably belong to one or more folk groups, such as family, ethnic or religious groups, regional or neighborhood groups, or the people that we work with. And when we stop to think about it, we realize that we have learned a great deal from these groups just by listening or watching. For example, what is the proper way to celebrate Christmas or some other holiday in your family, at school, at the place you work, and how did you learn that? You have probably noticed too that some members of folk groups make better teachers than others; perhaps they know more or perhaps they are particularly good at teaching or explaining. For example, one member of your family may know all the stories about your grandparents and aunts and uncles. Or a member of your ethnic group may know more songs, dances and recipes and techniques for making traditional foods than the other members of the same group may know. Some folklife traditions are reserved for special times such as weddings, holidays, or festivals. The people who practice them do not think of these traditions as unusual, although they may be to others who are not familiar with them.

These are some of the kinds or genres of folklore: stories, drama, music, song, dance, customs, beliefs, foodways, needlework, other household arts, games, sports, crafts, occupational lore, jokes, proverbs, riddles, sayings, oral history, life stories, religious beliefs and practices, folk medicine and curing.

People who know folklore are called tradition bearers and what they know is called their repertoire. It may be an active repertoire because they still tell the stories, practice the customs, or sing the songs, or it may be a passive repertoire because they remember a way of life that isn't practiced by their groups anymore.

INTRODUCTION TO FOLKLORE - TEACHER BACKGROUND

Sometimes a folklife tradition continues unchanged for generations and sometimes it continues with parts changing or evolving. We call this a living tradition. If no one in the group practices a custom for a while and then the group decides to do it again, we call it a revival.

Folklorists, persons who study folklore, do research in books and libraries like other scholars. But most of what they want to know is not in books, it is in the lives and minds of people. They can only study it by watching people (observation) and by asking a lot of questions (interviewing). When a folklorist observes and interviews, he/she is doing fieldwork and usually fieldwork is recorded in notes, on audio tape, in photos and on video tape. The people who have the information on folklore are called informants.

PROJECTS:

- 1) Identify by yourself or with your classmates, the kinds of folklore and folk groups in your life, in your school, in your community. How would you go about finding out what other groups exist besides the ones you know of? How would you identify a potential informant in one of these groups? How would you learn about the folklore of a group and what an individual in that group knows?
- 2) Select a folk group (you may be a member of it) and draw up a plan for finding out as much as possible about its folklore. List the people you would talk to; the events you would like to observe; the kinds of equipment you would need. Make a list of questions you would ask in an interview. Describe the kind of research that would help you investigate this folk community.
- 3) Select a good informant from a folk group and interview him or her. If you can, use a tape recorder and take one or two pictures of the informant in a typical setting. If you can't use a recorder, take notes on some of the stories or facts you learn. Write a report or give a presentation in class on what you learned and what you might ask if you were to do a second interview.

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Dorson, Richard, ed. Folklore and Folklife. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972. Collection of essays on various folklore genres.

INTRODUCTION TO FOLKLORE-TEACHER BACKGROUND

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Dundes, Alan, ed. The Study of Folklore. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965. Collection of essays that give a sense of the history and development of folklore scholarship.

Glassie, Henry. Pattern in the Material Culture of the Eastern U.S. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1969. An introduction to material culture studies.

Toelken, Barre. The Dynamics of Folklore. N.Y.: Houghton Mifflin, 1979. Good annotated bibliography. Takes a process folk group approach to folklore.

Yoder, Don, ed. American Folklife. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1976. Introductory text.

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Dorson, Richard M. America in Legend: Folklore from the Colonial Period to the Present. N.Y.: Pantheon Books, 1973. Legends in and of our history.

American Folklore. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959. Introduction to types of American folklore.

Buying the Wind. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952. Introduction to regional American folklore.

Glassie, Henry and MacEdward Leach. A Guide for Collectors of Oral Traditions and Folk Cultural Material in Pennsylvania. Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1968. Good, brief handbook on how to collect folklore.

Goldstein, Kenneth S. A Guide for Field Workers in Folklore. Hatboro, Pa.: American Folklore Society, 1964. Designed for lengthy field trips and collection projects.

INTRODUCTION TO FOLK MUSIC

by Thomas Vennum

The discipline of ethnomusicology has several principal concerns: folk music (e.g. sea chanties, Appalachian fiddle music, etc.); tribal music (e.g. songs of the Cheyenne Indians, music of the tribes of Africa and the Middle East, etc.); popular music (e.g. rock and roll, show tunes, polka bands, country-western, bluegrass, etc.); and art music ("classical music") of non-European countries (e.g. Japanese koto music, Balinese gamelan orchestras, Arabian lute music, etc.). Until recently, most of these musical traditions have been paid little scholarly attention although they probably account for 99% of the music performed in the world today.

Rather than simply looking at music from an historical perspective, ethnomusicologists are interested as well in the cultural setting of music. Beyond wanting to know what music was performed and when, they also ask such questions as why music is made, and what its function is in a given society.

What is the best approach to folk music in the classroom? Because music generally is such an abstract art, it is difficult for the student to verbalize it, particularly if he has no musical training and thus lacks even the basic vocabulary. Try, for instance, asking your class to provide a short definition of the word "harmony".

A useful beginning to the study of folk music would be to have the class try to arrive at some working definition of what it is. It should be quickly evident that, while each student has his own concept of what folk music is and can probably name several "folksingers," he will find it difficult to define exactly what qualifies someone as a folksinger. This is because most people today have come to accept a stereotype: the folksinger is usually a soloist who accompanies himself on an acoustical (non-electric) guitar, while he sings sad or contemplative songs over simple chord progressions. He is dressed informally and probably has long hair.

For the most part this description fits only the "professional folksinger" -- a person who has widespread acceptance from his audience through the various media (TV, recordings, etc.). Therefore, it is important to try to widen the student's perspective of what folk music is and how it functions. In contrast to the professional, a genuine folksinger has probably absorbed his repertoire of songs unconsciously through the years by hearing his father or grandfather sing. When he performs, it is usually for pleasure (not pay) and the situation will be informal (not on a stage with a microphone), probably among family or friends. A good example of a folk song which most Americans know and which functions in this manner is "Happy Birthday to You."

INTRODUCTION TO FOLK MUSIC - TEACHER BACKGROUND

When folk songs and folk music of a particular region become known outside of the areas in which they are traditionally performed, they may influence popular music. For instance, bluegrass and country-western music (popular) have developed from the traditional ballad, fiddle, and banjo music (folk) of Appalachia. Also, outside influences may cause changes in folk traditions. For example, in Europe, the accordian, a 19th century invention, has been displacing the fiddle as the instrument most often used for playing traditional music because it is far easier to master than the fiddle.

Most students have access to cassette tape recorders. They should be stimulated to go out collecting folk music on their own. They should begin at home by encouraging older members of the family to record songs they remember from their childhood, and particularly to talk about the songs, how they learned them, when they were customarily performed. From the family experience the student will be ready to collect and study folk music from outside his own tradition. Such music can be found in most ethnic enclaves of a nearby city, where traditional music is performed in restaurants, at weddings and funerals, and other celebrations. Such events are usually accessible to the student if he shows the proper respect for and genuine interest in other people's cultures.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Jabbour, Alan. "Folk Music." Arts in Virginia, 12,1 (1971).

Nettl, Bruno. Folk Music in the United States: An Introduction. 3rd revised ed.; Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 1976.

A good general introduction to folk music in this country. Considers the music of urban ethnic enclaves, American Indian music, and approaches the problems of defining folk music, as opposed to "art" music (classical) and popular music.

Odell, Scott. "Folk Instruments." Arts in Virginia, 12, 1 (1971).

Discusses instrument-making today which continues to flourish among Virginia's rural musicians, with the occasional aid of certain latter-day innovations.

INTRODUCTION TO FOLK MUSIC: A STUDY OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Most of us are familiar with several types of musical instruments which make their sound by setting one or more strings into vibration. Instruments such as the guitar, violin and banjo are well known in this country. As a group, they are called chordophones (from the Greek words for string and sound) to distinguish them from other principal divisions of musical instruments (percussion, winds, etc.).

Stringed instruments are made to sound essentially in one of three ways: they may be bowed, hammered (like a piano) or plucked. Strings may be plucked either individually or strummed as a group, using the fingers, as with harps, or some sort of pick, either held between the fingers or made into rings and worn on the fingers.

In this country alone, there is a wide variety of types for any given string instrument. Thus, the range of bowed strings extends from the violin, principally used for classical music but also adopted as a folk or popular instrument known as the fiddle, to the less elaborate types such as the fretless gourd fiddle of Appalachia, or even the single string violin of the Apache Indians.

One way in which we can familiarize ourselves with the rich variety of string music is to visit restaurants in ethnic communities which present traditional performers. Many Greek restaurants, for example, feature players of the bouzouki, nowadays often amplified, while restaurants in Arabic communities may have players of hammered dulcimers (the qanun of Lebanon, for example), or German communities, the zither, a plucked chordophone. Where live performances are not available, there are many excellent recordings available on such labels as Nonesuch (Explorer Series) or Folkways, which represent more exotic string traditions from around the world.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is a chordophone? Give some examples of traditional American instruments which are chordophones. If possible, gather a small assortment of instruments together and demonstrate the differences between chordophones, woodwinds and percussion.
2. Describe the techniques by which chordophones are played. How are these techniques different from those used to sound other types of instruments?
3. Obtain some recordings of music which is representative of several different ethnic groups. Can you identify the instruments being played?
4. Are there places where people in your community can go to hear folk music? What kinds of places are they (e.g. public or private, churches or restaurants, family gatherings, etc.)?

OCCUPATIONAL FOLKLIFE

by Peter Seitel

Members of occupational groups share specific skills, knowledge and kinds of work-related experience. Our jobs influence the kinds of day-to-day experiences we have and the way we see and think about the social world around us. These experiences are expressed in the folklife of occupational groups. Sometimes the expression is in the form of music, like sea chanties and the songs of lumberjacks, miners, cowboys, and truckdrivers. Occupational folklife can be seen in traditional ways of behaving while on the job: like the hazing of a young worker, informally agreed-upon work procedures, signal-language used to communicate over distances, celebrations of jobs completed, and ceremonies held when a fellow worker retires or dies. Often the folklife of an occupational group is expressed in the stories workers tell of significant job-related events which they saw or heard about. These stories contain inside information about the occupation and may require explanations by workers so that outsiders can understand them.

PROCEDURES FOR THE CLASSROOM

Discuss different kinds of occupational experiences: workers who work outdoors in extractive or construction industries like lumbermen, roadbuilders, farmers, miners, ironworkers (high-steel construction workers); transportation workers like railroad engineers and trainmen, airline pilots and cabin attendants, truck drivers, taxicab drivers, etc.; factory workers who work on assembly lines, clerks in retail stores; office workers, teachers, doctors and nurses. Each occupation can be discussed in terms of the skills required for it (both mental and manual), the nature of time on the job (alternations in work activity in relation to seasons, time of day, weather conditions, night-shift factory work, and employees who have days other than Sunday off).

PROJECT

Have each student interview a worker and write down a story he or she tells about something that happened on the job -- a funny occurrence, a tragic one, a famous person ~~met~~, telling off a boss or customer, "getting over on" someone of authority, etc. Discuss the story in terms of: what kind of occupation is it? (indoor/outdoor, dealing with customers, etc.). What occupations are similar to the one in question? In what ways? What does the story say about the occupation from an insider's point of view?

OCCUPATIONAL FOLKLIFE - TEACHER BACKGROUND

PROJECT

Have the students listen to some authentic songs of an occupation -- lumberjacks, cowboys, miners (see Library of Congress recordings listed below). Have them discuss what these songs express about the way of life of these occupational groups.

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Byington, Robert H., ed. Working Americans: Contemporary Approaches to Occupational Folklife. Smithsonian Folklife Studies Monograph. Los Angeles: University of California, California Folklore Society, 1978. Includes articles on strategies for collecting occupational folklife in contemporary urban and industrial contexts and describes the characteristics of occupational narrative.

Doerflinger, William. Shantymen and Shantyboys: Songs of the Sailor and Lumberman. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1951.

Fife, Austin and Alta. Cowboy and Western Songs. New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1969.

Green, Archie. Only a Miner: Studies on Recorded Coalmining Songs. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1972.
A comprehensive study of miners' songs on record, giving history and context of songs and of the people who created and sang them.

Terkel, Studs. Working. New York: Pantheon, 1974.
Popularly written best seller. Collects stories and opinions of workers in many occupations.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS RECORDINGS:

L8: Negro Work Songs and Calls.

L16: Songs and Ballads of the Anthracite Miners.

L26/27: American Sea Songs and Chanties.

L28: Cowboy Songs, Ballads, and Cattle Calls from Texas.

L56: Songs of the Michigan Lumberjack.

L60: Songs and Ballads of the Bituminous Miners.

L61: Railroad Songs and Ballads.

OCCUPATIONAL FOLKLIFE

Almost all occupations have some form of folklore. In the past there were cowboy songs, sailors' dances and the singing chants that railway track workers sang to keep their movements in time. Today, most occupational folklore is in the form of stories that workers in an occupation tell one another. If we listen closely, these tales can tell us a lot about the experience of working at a particular job. They also show us that folklore can be found in many different places.

There is a story told by a railroad trainman, a worker who couples and uncouples railroad cars, "throws" switches so cars can move from one track to another, and, in general, performs almost all of the work on a freight train except actually running the locomotive. This story is about Teddy, who is the hero of a number of stories like this one.

Teddy got injured one time. He got off too fast. They were on the fly and he got off too fast. When he got off it, he tripped and it rolled him. He rolled down there a long ways and he was wounded.

And so, when he recuperated enough to come back to work, why, he met with a claim agent to make a settlement for his injury.

So the claim agent wanted to go down to see where he got hurt at. He went down along the track and he said, "Teddy, just where did you get off at?"

And he said, "All along here!"

These are the actual spoken words of the storyteller. His grammar is acceptable in spoken language, but too informal for written language. There is a great deal of art in his narration, however. Using only a few well-chosen words, the narrator conveys a great deal of meaning. The trainman introduces his story with an opening sentence like the traditional "Once upon a time." "Teddy got injured one time," he says, letting us know he is about to entertain us with a story about that event. The adverbial phrase "one time" also implies that there were "other times" when Teddy played a central role. These stories are also familiar to the trainmen to whom the narrator is speaking.

Teddy is a kind of character we meet in the stories of many occupations. He is well-meaning but incompetent. He makes mistakes but can laugh at his own predicament. We remember stories about people like Teddy because he helps us to laugh at our own mistakes when we make them.

Note how the storyteller artfully describes the central point of the story without actually stating it directly. The claim agent wanted to find out "where (Teddy) got hurt." The storyteller emphasizes this by repeating it and adding an intensifying word: "Teddy, just where did you get off at?"

OCCUPATIONAL FOLKLIFE - STUDENT SPRINGBOARD

You see, the claim agent thinks that a person gets off the train at a certain point. We think so too, since we get off moving vehicles like trains or buses only after they have stopped. But Teddy's job, like the job of other trainmen, requires him to get on and off trains that are moving; so when he falls, it is not in a particular spot, but "all along here!" If you have fallen off a skateboard, you know something of how Teddy felt. Understanding the movement of vehicles and how to deal with it safely is an important part of being a railroad trainman.

A SUGGESTED PROJECT

Ask your parents or neighbors for a story about something that happened in his or her occupation. Is there a character like Teddy, who makes mistakes but can laugh about it? Is there a character who flaunts authority and gets away with it? Are there serious accidents that workers in the occupation still talk about?

Write the story down and think about what it tells you about the experience of the occupation, as we have done for this story of Teddy.

FAMILY FOLKLORE

by Steven Zeitlin, Ann Bay, Amy Kotkin, Holly Cutting-Baker

Family folklore is our term for the stories, expressions and traditions that characterize family life. Having children collect their family lore and share it with their classmates is an excellent way of channeling their curiosity about themselves and their families into the academic realm.

A good way to initiate this discovery is through a discussion of family traditions, a form of family folklore that can be easily understood and thoroughly appreciated by every age of student, from kindergarten on up. After explaining to the children that a family tradition is a special practice that a family reenacts in approximately the same way year after year, ask each student to describe his or her own family's way of celebrating an upcoming holiday, like Christmas or New Year's. Where is the holiday dinner held? What special dishes are served? Who does the cooking? Are any traditional table decorations used from year to year -- and if so, what are their origins?

In the course of this discussion, it should become clear to students that while we all share certain traditions, many of the ways that a family has of celebrating a given holiday are uniquely its own. Some of these variations may be explained on the basis of regional, racial, or ethnic heritage, while others arise because of a particular family's history or the personalities and creativity of individual family members.

Another form of family folklore that students enjoy is the family story, with its strong dramatic and often humorous appeal. A class treasury of family stories might be collected by your students through interviews with parents, grandparents and other family members. Have your students read the example of a story that was collected by a 7th grader as part of a class project, then have them write down a few of their own. Perhaps they could illustrate each one to display as they share their stories with the class. In addition to the antics of parents and relatives in their youth, stories are often told about lost fortunes in the family, immigration, crossing the country in a covered wagon, pirates and horse thieves, famous relatives, supernatural occurrences, great fires and other occasions when family members came close to death.

Like family traditions and stories, family photographs are fun for young persons to work with -- and are readily available in most families. You might ask students to bring in pictures and work on photojournals, a combination of stories, reminiscences and family photos. Since such documents are likely to be enjoyed by the families as well as the class, the project may serve to enhance the student's feelings of self-worth by helping to make him a contributing family member.

FAMILY FOLKLORE - TEACHER BACKGROUND

An ideal class assignment is to have students interview family members. This can help give the students some important skills such as interviewing, notetaking and possibly using a tape recorder. A possible questionnaire is provided for students to use when doing these activities.

Also ideal is to have parents and grandparents come in to the school to share their food customs, stories and photographs with the class. Family folklore can make many events of history seem more real to students. A classroom exhibition of photographs, artifacts and other materials from the children's own families can be used to illustrate a unit such as "the westward movement" or "immigration" -- and inviting family members in to school to share their reminiscences of an era can literally bring history to life. The study of family lore is a good way of bridging the gap between home and school.

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Cook, Ann, et. al. What Was It Like When Your Grandparents Were Your Age?
New York: Pantheon, 1976.

A photographic depiction of the world of our grandparents in the early part of the century.

Cutting-Baker, Holly, et. al. Family Folklore. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1976.

Ninety-four pages of stories, traditions, food customs, photographs, and other forms of family lore collected at the Festival of American Folklife. Available through

Random House, Inc. 800/638-6460

"The Family Folklore Interviewing Guide and Questionnaire."

A seven page guide to interviewing one's own family. Available through Consumer Information Center, Department 96G, Pueblo, Colorado 81009.
Price: \$.70.

Dixon, Janet T. and Dora Flack. Preserving Your Past: A Painless Guide to Writing Your Autobiography and Family History. Garden City, NJ.: Doubleday and Co., 1977.

A particularly good how-to-do-it family history book, offering useful lessons on the creative writing which goes into effective family histories.

Weitzman, David. Underfoot: An Everyday Guide to Exploring the American Past. New York: Scribner's, 1976.

An excellent, well designed book aimed at the amateur historian.

My Backyard History Book. Covelo, Ca.: Yolla Bolly Press, 1975.

A family history book aimed specifically at children.

Zeitlin, Steven. "Harmonize." Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1976.

A film in which the traditions of five different families are shared and discussed by family members.

FAMILY FOLKLORE

When we use the term family folklore, we are talking about the stories, expressions and traditions that characterize family life. Collecting family lore and sharing it with your classmates is a good way to find out about yourself and your family.

A family tradition is special practice that a family does again and again in approximately the same way year after year. Here is an example:

My grandmother and grandfather went to Kansas in a covered wagon. My grandfather took out a section of land, I think that's 640 acres. There are almost no trees in that central section of Kansas. It's the rolling prairie. He planted a big grove of maple trees, and those trees were so sacred to him that he would never cut one, not even for Christmas. So presents were always put at each person's place at the dining room table.

Even later on, when different branches of the family would have Christmas, they still use the table for their presents... We do now have a little tree, but the presents are always on the table... Trees are not for gifts. Trees are sacred in my family.

Mary Drechster

Describe your own family's way of celebrating a special holiday, like Christmas or New Year's. Where is the holiday dinner held? What special dishes are served? Who does the cooking? Are any traditional table decorations used from year to year -- and if so, what are their origins?

Everyone likes to hear a good story, particularly when it is about something or someone that relates to ourselves. It's fun to hear about our parents and relatives in their youth, stories about lost fortunes in the family, immigration, crossing the country in a covered wagon, famous relatives, supernatural occurrences, great fires and other occasions when family members came close to death. Here is an example of a story that was collected by a 7th grader as part of a class project:

My mother's Uncle Leo always had to feed the pigs when he was a boy. But he didn't like feeding them. Whenever his Dad asked him if he had fed the pigs, he said he did when he really didn't.

One day Leo went outside. He noticed that two of the pigs were dead. They died of starvation. Leo ran away and didn't come back till dark. Then he started (pretending) to feed the pigs. Each day he moved them into a different position so that when his mom and dad looked out the window they wouldn't get suspicious. Since rigor mortis had set in, the pigs were stiff and their eyes bulged out. Because of the eyes, Leo had to make the pigs face in the opposite direction.

FAMILY FOLKLORE - STUDENT SPRINGBOARD

One day when Leo was sick, his Dad went out to feed the pigs for him...He called the pigs and when the two dead ones didn't answer, he went to investigate. He tapped one of them, and it fell over. The same happened to the other. Leo was lucky that he was sick because he couldn't get that much of a beating.

Look at "Beginning Family Folklore Questionnaire" and choose one or two of the questions to work on. Share your findings with the class. Your teacher will have some additional suggestions for sources of information and other activities.

A BEGINNING FAMILY FOLKLORE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What do you know about your last name? Its origin? Its meaning? Did it undergo change coming from the Old Country to the United States? Are there stories about the change?
2. What expressions and nicknames are used in your family? How did they get started? Is a particular member of your family especially good at making up expressions?
3. What stories have come down to you about your parents? Grandparents? More distant ancestors? How have these relatives described their lives to you? What have you learned from them about their childhoods, schooling, jobs and recreation? Do different relatives tell the same stories in different ways? How do their versions differ?
4. In your family are there any photographs, dishes or other objects that once belonged to your ancestors? If so, what stories are connected with these things?
5. Are there recipes in your family from past generations? If so, where did they come from and how were they passed down? Are they still in use today?
6. Compare the stories and photographs about your present family with the stories and photos of your parents' and grandparents' families. What does the comparison say about how life has changed over the years?

CHILDREN'S FOLKLIFE

by Kate Rinzler

Children are bearers of a culture of remarkably wide spread distribution. Games and lore have survived massive changes in the lives of immigrant groups. They have been demonstrated to cross over otherwise strongly defined racial and ethnic barriers such as those between slaves and slave masters. Examined from an historical perspective, games prove the conservative tendencies as well as the ongoing inventiveness of children. This conservatism is in response to culture change in a world characterized by technological change and a mass communication network which provides information and images distinctively different from all previous traditional society. Caught in the currents of change, children invent new games and verbal lore which reflect the larger society.

OUTLINE OF CHILDREN'S FOLKLIFE

1. Neighborhood and back yard games: sports and other ball games, hiding and chasing and leader games, circle, clap and jump rope games, marbles, jacks, hop scotch.
2. Home games: cards, table games, party games.
3. Classroom games: coin basketball, paper football, gliders, tic tac toe, hangman, connect dots.
4. Car travel games: twenty questions, grandmother's trunk.
5. Making friends and enemies: conventions of private and gang fights, making friends and ending friendship.
6. Fantasy play: dolls, hospital, school, horses, fairies, kings and queens, cops and robbers, cowboys, soldiers, superman, spacemen.
7. Performing and showing off: talent shows, fashion shows, cheer leading, sidewalk gymnastics, sparring.
8. Verbal lore: taunts and retorts, riddles, jokes, scary stories, secret languages and signals, tongue twisters, limericks, parodies, retold biographical and autobiographical stories.
9. Borrowing, trading, collecting and stealing traditions.
10. School and classroom diversions: hooky, teacher, substitute and peer harrassments, traditional activities for locker room, lunch room, supply closets, music room, art room, rest rooms, etc.

CHILDREN'S FOLKLIFE - TEACHER BACKGROUND

11. Clubs, gangs and best friends: rites of initiation and ostracism, codes of law, activities.
12. Conveyances: bicycles, skate boards, sleds, ice skates, roller skates-skills, tricks, dares, competitions and places to go.
13. Parties: slumber parties, camping parties, club parties, birthday parties, Halloween parties.

AN APPROACH TO USING CHILDREN'S FOLKLIFE FOR SUBJECT MATTER IN THE CLASSROOM

1. Definition: What do the children in the classroom do in their spare time? What were their activities when they were younger? For historical perspective, what did the teacher do as a child? Compare these with the outline above and compose a classification of the class's folklife activities.
2. Collect folklore: Children collect their own folklore in the classroom through tape and video recording, class survey, form interview and verbatim account informal interview.
3. Demonstrate folklore: Children perform selections from collected folklore to the rest of the class.
4. Transcribe and collate information from collection: Write out texts from tape and video recordings. Collate information from surveys and interviews.
5. Analyze collections and surveys: Catalogue games for increasing complexity, trace sources of text in games and songs, explain why children like to play games, find out what are the most popular games and pastimes, find out if boys and girls choose different games and if so what, find out how rules are used in games and who enforces them.
6. Research: Research books and dictionaries of folkgames for variations on local games and types of analysis. Find descriptions of children's folklife in fiction and compare with children's life today. Helga Sandburg, Mark Twain, Dickens, Dylan Thomas' 'A Child's Christmas in Wales', Shawn O'Casey's autobiography, Norman Douglas' 'London Street Games', Thomas Hardy's 'Under the Greenwood Tree', Thomas Hughes' 'Tom Brown's School Days'. Films, recorded folk music, photographs and museum collections can provide examples of folklore and folklife in general. A series of videotapes available from the office of Museum Programs of the Smithsonian Institution provides examples of folk games from five cultures.
7. Outreach: Collect folklore in other classrooms, schools and neighborhoods and from members of the children's families. For historical perspective interview elderly members of the community.

CHILDREN'S FOLKLIFE - TEACHER BACKGROUND

8. Publication and performance: Publish mimeographed manuscript of children's collections and essays. Send articles to children's magazines. Make bulletin board or show case of photos, artifacts and writings. Develop lecture demonstration of folklore and games to perform for other classes or schools. Teach games to classes of younger children.

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- Opie, Iona and Peter. Children's Games in Street and Playground. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969. This volume contains descriptions and comments on games played in Great Britain, drawn from a broad survey of current children's free play.
- The Lore and Language of Schoolchildren. New York: Oxford University Press, 1959. This volume contains examples of a broad range of children's lore from Great Britain. Many of the games and examples of lore can be found in American children's repertoire. Therefore they are excellent for children doing comparative research.
- Sutton-Smith, Brian. The Folkgames of Children. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1972. This volume of essays includes one essay on games played in New Zealand with descriptions of each game and analysis of changes in children's choices of games from the late 19th century to the present. A second essay analyses sixty years of change in American children's games.

CHILDREN'S FOLKLORE

Directions:

Write down the name and a brief description of each game you learned while you were in the kindergarten, first, second, third grade, and so on. Ask your parents to do the same on a separate sheet of paper. If your grandparents and/or greatgrandparents are available, ask them to write down the names of the games they learned at each grade level. When you have collected all of your answer sheets, transfer all of the data to your data retrieval chart. When recording grandparents' names indicate which grandparent gave you that listing by marking a 1 (for father's side), or a 2 (for mother's side), next to the name of the game. See if you can find any differences or similarities between the games you listed and those your parents/grandparents wrote down. Sometimes, a game you and your parents learned in the first grade will have the same name, but may have very different rules. List both sets of rules on your sheet. Play each version. Which one do you like best? Why? How has the name changed over the years? Are both versions different from the way your grandparents played it? In what ways are they different? Classify the games into categories, e.g. sports and other ball games, clapping and jump rope games, classroom games, playground games, etc.

Draw a large data retrieval sheet on the blackboard and collect the data from you classmates' retrieval sheets. Use the questions listed below to guide your class discussion.

Questions:

1. As you record the data on the class chart, do you see any patterns emerging? Are there certain games which are always taught at one specific grade level?
2. Are there any games which reflect the culture of a particular ethnic group or region of the country?
3. Are there any differences in the types of games the boys learned vs. those learned by the girls?

Children's Games - Data Retrieval Sheet

<u>Grade Level</u>	<u>Myself</u>	<u>Mother</u>	<u>Games learned by:</u> <u>Father</u>	<u>Grandmother</u>	<u>Grandfather</u>
K					
1					
2					
3					
4	25				26

<u>Grade level</u>	<u>Myself</u>	<u>Mother</u>	Games learned by: <u>Father</u>	<u>Grandmother</u>	<u>Grandfather</u>
5					
6					
7					
8					

TEACHER BACKGROUND

FOLKLORE IN YOUR OWN COMMUNITY

by Jack Santino

Although one is used to thinking of folklore as old stories and dying crafts, found only among the elderly in our society, or among such marginal groups as American Indians, the Appalachian poor, or recent immigrant groups, these guidelines should suggest that many of the contemporary approaches to discovering and appreciating folklore that are addressed in this series (e.g. occupational and family) are applicable to the living and working situations of all of us. At school, children have traditional games and legends about their teachers, and at home they have special holiday customs and they listen to the stories of their parents and grandparents and hear tales about their ancestors. They probably are not as aware of other aspects of their parents' lives. For instance, they probably are not privy to parental talk about their jobs; they may never have been encouraged to investigate the history and culture of the town, region, or state in which they live; they may not be aware of the cultural treasures that are to be found literally in their own back yard, or at least down the street.

Children and adults tend to see workers in their towns and neighborhoods as representatives of an occupation (e.g. mail carrier, taxicab driver, fruit seller) rather than as individuals with stories to tell, jokes to enjoy, skills to demonstrate, and memories to share. Ironically, approaching people from this point of view -- as members of an occupation that is an integral part of the community -- allows one access to the essentially human qualities of good humor and artistic self expression that are so often overlooked when one accepts a label or a stereotype at face value.

Men and women translate their experiences into stories all the time. People are essentially creative, and folklore is the people's art. Folklore arises in response to social settings and social situations, so we have family folklore, ethnic folklore, and occupational folklore, each the artistic response to and comment on those particular social groups and levels of society. There is also a folklore that is part of the community in which we live, be it small town or big city, as well as folklore arising out of key aspects of your community. It is a challenging but enlightening task to tap into it.

FOLKLORE IN YOUR OWN COMMUNITY - TEACHER BACKGROUND

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- Santino, Jack, ed. 1978 Festival of American Folklife Program Book. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978.
See especially articles on "Folklore in Your Community: Stone Carvers" and "The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters." These articles exemplify the wealth of rich material and interesting people that can be found in any city or community.
- Spradley, James P. and David W. McCurdy, eds. The Cultural Experience: Ethnography in a Complex Society. Kingsport, TN, 1972.
A collection of ethnographic descriptions, written by students, of various occupations and various social scenes. The book will introduce teachers to the kinds of assignments that are immediately available to student research as well as indicate the kinds of information a student can collect. Highly recommended.
- Wiggenton, Eliot, ed. The Foxfire Books. Garden City, N.J.: Doubleday Anchor Press, 1975.
Collections of the results of student fieldwork projects. Students were instructed to interview their parents, grandparents, and other townsfolk. The students discovered not only a wide range of traditional folklore and folklife, but also learned the value of bridging the generation gap.

FOLKLORE IN YOUR OWN COMMUNITY

From ancient traditional crafts to the artistic expression of everyday experiences, folklore is available in any community. At a program called "Folklore in Your Community" at recent Festivals of American Folklife, participants ranged from artisans of Italian descent demonstrating their centuries old craft of stone carving (they do all the work on the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C.), to taxicab drivers sharing their anecdotes about customers, road conditions, and job problems. Also included have been workers from the large, open air markets in Washington; street hawkers whose sales pitches are composed of traditional rhymes; office workers from the Capitol Building; bartenders; and musicians who make their living singing on streetcorners.

These are just a few possibilities. Fire fighters and policemen both have highly visible and interesting jobs, and are familiar with and representative of the people and experiences of the community in which they work. The baker in the local bakery will have cooking and decorating skills to demonstrate, stories about his customers, descriptions of the ebb and flow of the townspeople (e.g. the Sunday morning after church crowd that comes in for donuts), and testimony concerning the wider economic network of which he is a part (e.g. the rising price of sugar and how it is affecting business).

That is the key: identify groups that encapsulate aspects of the community (public servants such as the police, or trash collectors); very "visible" community figures (such as the owners of the neighborhood "mom and pop" grocery stores, and street vendors); and "invisible" behind the scene people who are integral to community institutions (e.g. the trainers for the sports teams, office workers in the city hall, the retired elderly on the park bench).

Many community events encompass several different kinds of folklore. In Silver Spring, Maryland, on the second Tuesday of every month, telephone company workers meet to conduct the business of their social organization, The Central Officers Club. The business part of the meeting takes about a half an hour, but one event always stretches from 7 pm to 11 pm, or later. At about 7 pm, men begin to filter in early, carrying cases of beer. The cook sets up early, preparing the evening's fare: fried oysters, or chile, perhaps hot dogs and beans. After the business meeting, which is a spirited give and take of nominations for office positions, after the selling of raffle tickets, and the raffle itself, the men break into groups of five or six. They play cards. They eat. They tell jokes. They tell stories about each other, about bosses, about customers.

Farrier: Remember when Dusty and those guys chipped in and bought the pie for that guy so the guy could dump the pie on Ralph Abrams' face?

King: I heard about it, yeah.

Hall: I heard about it.

FOLKLORE IN YOUR OWN COMMUNITY - STUDENT SPRINGBOARD

Jones: Who was the guy?

Farrier: I don't know. Some crazy guy. He was a guy who had been retired from the D.C. police force for disability, for nervousness. And they all sat down, at the navy hospital, and Pete came in there with Niles, and they were sitting there--you never heard that story?

Hall: I heard it, yeah.

Farrier: And some guy says "Man, I'd give ten dollars, I'd give anything if somebody'd hit that son of a bitch in the face with a pie." And this guy says, "Well, I'll do it for ten dollars." You see this money right out on the table. And the guy went up there and took enough slices of pie to make a big round pie. And he walked right like that, carrying the pie. I wasn't there, but there must've been a lot of guys there, cause I've talked to guys that--Dusty was there--and he walked right up to Ralph and then he made out like he tripped and hit Ralph right in the face with the pie. You know, knocked the glasses off his face...the guy wound up he had to pay the cleaning bill for Ralph's clothes.

Santino: Was Ralph a boss?

Farrier: Yes sir! He was the big boss!

Santino: And the other guy, what was his job?

Farrier: Just an installer.

These stories comprise just some of the folklore of this group of men. Notice that the story is in oral circulation ("I wasn't there, but I've talked to guys"). Hitting the boss in the face with a pie is an heroic act to these men, and their folklore tells of it. The club meeting is itself an important social event, with occasional dances and other special events. But mostly it is a time and place where friends can get together, away from the television set, and enjoy themselves by sharing stories with each other.

ACTIVITIES

Interview these people about their jobs, about their lives in relation to the community. Find out what they, as behind the scene workers, say to each other about the building they work in or the monument they service. Visit them at the scene of their work and meet their co-workers. Ask them about famous or funny co-workers. Some will be more willing to talk than others, and some will have a greater interest in, and know more about, the stories and lore circulating on the work site or surrounding the institution that they represent (e.g. ghost stories that may circulate about a famous statue or an airplane that crashed).

ETHNIC FOLKLORE

by Susan Kalčík

One kind of folk group in American society is the ethnic group. America has been described as a plural culture because of the diversity of our people's ethnic origins. Often in the past it was thought that the differences new immigrants brought with them would or should disappear and our culture become homogenized. Thus, attempts have been made periodically in our history to Americanize immigrants. But many ethnic groups and individuals kept traditions and customs that were important to their sense of identity. These traditions gave them a comfortable feeling of belonging to the smaller ethnic group at the same time that they belonged to the larger group of Americans. And these traditions gave them a sense of individuality or uniqueness, of not being just like everyone else. Presently Americans in general value ethnic distinctions and are proud to claim their ethnic heritage. This was not always so and we still find many people, especially older ones, who are reluctant to discuss ethnicity and many others who gave up their ethnic identity and traditions.

When we speak of an individual ethnic group, it is important to be clear about just what we mean. For example, if I am talking about Polish Americans do I mean anyone in America who claims Polish background, or do I mean Polish Americans who live in the same town, neighborhood or parish? The latter would be more likely to share traditions and customs and to work together and, hence, more likely to fall within the definition of a folk group.

Another point to keep in mind when dealing with ethnic folklore is the distinction between conscious and unconscious forms. For many people do not think much about their ethnic traditions; they cook, celebrate weddings and holidays, worship, dance and so on as they learned to in their families and these traditions seem quite ordinary to them. Other ethnic Americans are conscious that they can choose different ways of doing these things or that they can choose to act out their ethnic identity in some situations but not in others.

Like all folklore, ethnic folklore can occur in two kinds of arenas, the public and the private. The crucial question here is who are the people involved. In the public situation persons who are not members of the folk group are present; in the private arena only members of the folk group are present. Some people do not mind performing or talking about ethnic traditions in a public setting but others are comfortable only in a private setting such as their family, or at a parish harvest celebration. Naturally a student would respect the privacy of individuals and groups and their right not to talk about subjects that make them uncomfortable.

Some kinds or genres of ethnic folklore are: music, dance, song, rhymes, riddles, stories, proverbs, sayings, weddings, funerals, festivals, christenings, holidays, holydays, immigration stories, religious practices, foodways,

ETHNIC FOLKLORE - TEACHER BACKGROUND

needlework, crafts, household arts. One kind of ethnic folklore that requires careful treatment is the study of ethnic slurs - jokes or sayings about an ethnic group that present it in a stereotypical or negative fashion. Often the same jokes will be told about several different ethnic groups and it is useful to learn what kinds of things are generally said about groups, which groups ethnic slurs are told about, and when and why specific groups are the subject of ethnic slurs.

Ethnic folklore functions to hold the group members together; their traditions give them a sense of a shared past and present. Their customs identify members of the group to each other and they signal group membership to outsiders. And one of the most important functions of ethnic folklore, especially of the conscious kind, is that participation in it is a way of celebrating ethnic identity.

SUGGESTIONS FOLLOW FOR QUESTIONS AND PROJECTS TO POSE TO YOUR STUDENTS:

Individually or with your classmates identify the ethnic groups in your region, community, school, class. Are any recent immigrants?

How would you explore the folklore of one of these groups and/or one individual in such a group? Write an outline of how you might go about doing this. What organizations would help you prepare? Are there magazines or newspapers, radio or TV shows that are useful? What events would you consider it important to observe and study? If possible, put your plan into action.

What kinds of folklore would you expect to find in the private arena of an ethnic group? What kinds would you expect groups to feel very comfortable about in public? What reasons would you give to explain the differences?

Select an event or holiday and see how many different ethnic groups celebrate it. What are their customs, dress, food and so on? What are the similarities and differences?

Select a type of folklore (for example, songs that tell stories) and collect it from different groups. What are the similarities and differences?

Collect the life history of an immigrant. What was life like in the old country? Why did she/he come to a new country? What was the trip like? What was it like to adjust to a new country?

Identify your own ethnic background and describe your ethnic traditions as fully as possible. Tell what you know and collect information from your family. What kinds of things didn't you know about your ethnic background and why do you think you didn't know about them? Who in your family seems to know the most about the ethnic traditions? Are you or some members of your family uncomfortable talking about ethnic folklore or some of it? Are you or any of your family aware of stereotypes about ethnic group?

ETHNIC FOLKLORE - TEACHER BACKGROUND

The interview reproduced in the following Student Springboard was made at the 1975 Festival of American Folklife. You may use it as an example of an interviewing project one of your students might wish to undertake.

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ETHNIC FOLKLORE - TEACHER BACKGROUND

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ETHNIC FOLKLORE

The Festival of American Folklife is interested in certain kinds of "gifts" the various immigrants brought with them, particularly those that fall under the rubric of folklore or folklife. At the Festival held in Washington during the summer of 1975, we invited a family from New York to share with us and the Festival visitors a tradition of nearly life size marionettes which had been in their family for five generations. The Manteo marionette show, presenting a part of the saga of Orland (Roland), was an immense favorite with the crowds who came to see the "Old Ways in the New World" section of the Festival.

On a bitter cold Sunday, in January of 1976, in a church hall on Bleeker Street, a number of the Manteos met and shared with me their knowledge of and feelings about the marionettes and the part they have played in the life of the family. Michael Manteo, whom I will call Papa, introduced himself with these words: "I am Michael -- they call me Papa -- Manteo; I live after my father's name. I'll carry his name until as far as I can do it." His son, Mike, also carries the grandfather's name, Agrippino Michael Manteo, Jr. Papa's older sister, Ida Manteo Grillo, and her daughter, Susie, were the other two family members who speak most frequently in the edited transcript that follows. I would like to thank all the family, and especially these four, for sharing their story and for the warmth they showed me.

Susan Kalčik

PAPA—Well, the family came from Sicily, there's a town called—

IDA—Catania

PAPA—Where my father was born, and his father, my grandfather.

We came to this country in 1919, 1920, something like that. First we had the marionette show and then we closed up and opened up a movie house, but we weren't so happy about the movie house. We went right back again and opened up a theatre on Mulberry Street in 1928. That's when we started the real performances, at 109 Mulberry Street.

SUSIE—They stopped giving regular performances in 1939 when my uncle died. Right? My grandpa closed down the theatre.

MIKE—My grandfather became an electrician in the 20's. Because many times the marionettes didn't pay. My grandfather started the business and he passed it on to my father, my father passed it on to me, and my Uncle Bill [Ida's husband] got caught in the family and, whether he liked it or not, he was a puppeteer and an electrician.

PAPA—Why do I know these things about the puppets? I'll tell you why. Because when I was a little boy, the first thing I do, when I started to walk, I get on stage, right. And I sit by a pail of sand, (you know you got the fire department rules), and I sit there and I look. I'm just about seven, eight years old. And I look at my father, and I look at the men that were working on the bridge and you gather all this and you gather the language too. The same thing with my sister. My sister at the age of, not even fifteen, already she started to throw voices through my father's tuition.

And there I'm looking at my sister; I'll follow her. And then I was envying those people up there that manipulated those heavy marionettes. And that's how you became a puppeteer. Because you cannot, especially these kind of marionettes, you cannot teach. You've got to learn yourself. You have to go every night, every night. Then as I got old, I got promoted. I was allowed to get on the bridge. And then I was privileged to hold a marionette. And the professor would take it and make him walk,

then he'd turn it around and get it ready for me and he told me, "All right, you hold it this way and be attentive. When your father speaks his words, you look at your father and when he talks for the king, you just move the arm this way." And then I was a nervous wreck. This was my first time. And I graduated, slowly, slowly, they allow me. It's something like, if you aren't of age, you can't drink. That's how you learn. Because if you teach them, they take it for granted. Let them go by themselves, they'll learn.

MIKE—We've got about 120 manonettes now.

PAPA—When I was in production with my father, back in the thirties—500. The kind of shows I ran, the stones involved, I would say, about 150 different manonettes coming in and out. I have five puppets just about 97 years old. They were made by my grandfather and my father. There are pieces that my father did in Italy.

IDA—Some from the 1800's, more than a hundred years old.

PAPA—I have original manonettes from my grandfather and then the ones that the whole family built when we were in New York. But when we came here we really made more. The show called for more manonettes. The last one my father built was in 1937. A beautiful suit of armor. When I was not in production anymore, I destroyed quite a few. But I don't worry because if I was in production again I would build again. The newest one I've got is four months old. And if you put this marionette that is four months old with the one that is about ninety-seven years old, you will not know the difference.

MIKE—Except you made the armor out of stainless steel. You thought of your son, because it's much lighter, this new marionette. The other ones weigh like eighty pounds. The giant weighs a hundred pounds.

PAPA—The bodies are made out of—some of it pine, some of it oak. The pine is lighter, but sometimes you have to use oak

for the feet and the fist. The fist has to be strong because that takes so much punishment, when they use the sword to fight. The left hand has to be opened up like that to show that it's holding a fist. Then we drill a hole through it to put the sword in. And the head is made out of pine; the rest of the body's out of pine. And then we've got excelsior and canvas. And with the excelsior I keep on putting it on the frame out of two by two lumber, and I keep on turning my hand with twine and shaping up the excelsior, shaping up the leg. And the same thing, I shape up the whole torso. And then when it comes to sculpturing, you've got to have real Italian sculpturing chisels, because they are homemade. You have to make them. And I have a few only. But I don't do any more sculpturing like I used to.

MIKE—Well, now you're doing a lot of the armor work.

PAPA—Yes, I'm practicing more on the armor. You know, you can call me a very good tailor, but not textile. Metal! And I can make a beautiful suit. Ida makes the ladies' dresses, costumes.

IDA—See, my mother used to make them and I used to help her. I used to design the dress and then she used to get an idea—After she died, I took over. And also, I paint the sceneries too.

PAPA—She does all the painting on all the drops. And it doesn't take her long to do it. All watercolor, no oil.

MIKE—The paint is powdered form, right Dad?

PAPA—Powdered. You have to have powder.

MIKE—And it's very pliable.

PAPA—I can't find powder like I used to years ago. We have to go out of the way to see where we can find powdered paints. And we mix it up with some water and some glue; we say one part glue, four parts water. Mike also works on the puppets.

MIKE—Whatever he wants me to do. Dad does the sculpting, painting the armor—

PAPA—I manufacture a marionette com-

ETHNIC FOLKLORE - STUDENT SPRINGBOARD

pletely.

MIKE—But I've seen the way he's done it and when the time comes to jump in, I'll jump in.

PAPA—The whole story (in the show) takes 3, 3½ years. There are about fifteen generations with the show.

MIKE—There's a multitude of stories.

PAPA—I don't know if you ever read medieval stories, about Constantine the Great. He started the Christian faith; and then, generation, generation, it came to Charlemagne. From Charlemagne came his son and two more generations. That ends the story. Then the sequel.

IDA—It's like the Bible, just like the Bible.

PAPA—See the end of the Palladin, then the sequel; there's the story of Guido Santo. Then how long does Guido Santo last?

IDA—About three months.

PAPA—So Guido Santo dies. Now we have another sequel which is two brothers, Dolores and Strenero. That lasts about three months. This story has two brothers unknown to each other. So after that comes, what my sister says, the Crusaders. That's just the last. So by the time that finished, then we start all over again and people start coming in again, the same people, and we repeat the story again.

MIKE—If the audience was interested in and tended toward dialogue, then the story would be mostly dialogue. If they wanted fighting, there'd be more fighting. They would go with the audience; it was a very flexible show.

SUSIE—Think of it like the serials you have on the TV soap operas.

MIKE—A medieval soap opera, this is what it was.

IDA—The people would get very involved. Once, when the hero, Orlando, he is put in chains, about twelve o'clock, somebody came and knocked at the door. Because we used to live upstairs, and the theatre was downstairs. And he says, "Mr. Manteo, I can't sleep." "What is this, you can't sleep? Why?" He says, "Orlando, he's in chains,

he's in prison. Please go downstairs and take the chains off." You would see the people crying over the scene. And we cried too. Because I take the female's part. And those parts, you feel—especially every night you get this character, that you talk for more than three, four months, and then she dies—

SUSIE—You become part of that person.

IDA—And when she dies, we cry and we feel it in our hearts.

PAPA—To me the marionettes are I would call it a priceless possession; we could never sell.

MIKE—It's a part of you; it's a part of the family.

PAPA—If you ask any members of my family here, they've got the same idea—you don't sell. Because you build them yourself. There's something about that you love. It's something, like I said before, priceless.

MIKE—It's a part of your life. It's a part of you as much as your arms. We get together to work on the puppets when we have opportunities to. Everybody pitches in, building, refurbishing the marionettes. Dad puts them together, decides what's supposed to be put together, what's not, what characters we want, to prepare for the eventual show that may come up.

IDA—And I have worked on the bridge too. I had to have the muscles.

PAPA—You'd be surprised. Look, my niece Joany already worked on the bridge. Susan now and then comes up when she has—Of course, she's got kids to take care of, but when she's free, she's up there. We can't keep them away.

IDA—And we have now sons-in-law. So we have one, two, three manipulators, now.

MIKE—My daughters are about ready to go on.

PAPA—My granddaughters. And as these kids grow, we'll have manipulators, plenty of them.

IDA—We have little Joe.

PAPA—He's going to be a good one.

MIKE—Hurry up, Tommy, grow.

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MATERIAL FOLKLIFE

by Henry Glassie

As surely as people express themselves and their relations with others in songs and stories, they push their thought into the world in making objects. Artifacts - dinners, dresses, houses, entire landscapes - provide direct entrance into the minds of other people. Until recently only limited work had been done on the American material culture that balanced the spiritual culture of songs and sayings. Now, fortunately, such work is being done by students with many different orientations, geographical and historical as well as folkloristic, but much more remains to be done and the field is open for exploration; the society of scholars of material culture would welcome your participation.

The best way to begin a study of material culture is to locate one of its producers. They are all around us. They are ourselves. And you might begin by asking yourself about the things you make, where you learned to make them, why you make them, how they please you, how they serve other people. Objects themselves can be approached, your home or neighborhood, a family heirloom. These things have much to teach us about ourselves, about other people, about our history and future.

As with other folk traditions, the collector of material culture must strive to get as much information as possible. We need to know exactly what the object is, and photographs and careful measured drawings are essential. The description of the object, this quilt or this pot, should be so rich that another person could recreate the object entirely from your description. In addition, as much circumstantial information as possible should be assembled. Who made this thing, and when and where and why and how? Who used it subsequent to its manufacture? How was it marketed, altered, and what is its current state of affairs? The answers to questions like these will enable us to get beyond mere things and into the minds of their producers to discover what it is like to think like someone else. And that discovery is perhaps the greatest adventure left to modern people.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES AND EXAMPLES

It is most convenient, and challenging, to begin with a natural assemblage of artifacts. An entire farm is an example of such an assemblage. Make a measured plan of the farm and of each of its buildings. Find out through interviews how the buildings are used and what are the names for their parts. Indicate furniture on your plans and photograph the artful arrangement of decor within the rooms. A detailed inventory of a farm, with an oral history of its components, would provide a valuable record of the past of the farm's inhabitants, as well as a guide to their values. Their economic values would be displayed in the way things are arranged tastefully. Their social values would come out of an analysis of the way things are organized to enable or inhibit social exchange. Photograph all the buildings, the fences and fields,

MATERIAL FOLKLIFE - TEACHER BACKGROUND

have recorded folk belief. At best, we may have discovered truths missing from our formulations of existence.

BACKGROUND

If folklorists logically concentrate in areas where people are in intimate control over their own plans -- where the farmer plants and harvests, the cook prepares and serves -- still large industrial settings do not lack their folk cultural dimension. The tools as well as the beliefs and ballads of cowboys, lumberjacks and miners deserve the folklorist's attention. But when the tools no longer express the people, there are still traditional ways to use them and stories that lighten the burden of unhappy labor. No work place, neither the factory nor secretarial pool, lacks utterly in material expressions of the humanity of its workers. There is the baby picture taped to the lathe, the xeroxed joke thumbtacked to the bulletin board.

While you are in the field, recording artifacts, interviewing people about their hopes and miseries, you must keep some large goal before you to guide in what to observe, what to note, what to study. In the moment, however, the best rule is: record it. Finally, it is better to have recorded something worthless than to have ignored something worthwhile. It is amazing how the seemingly trivial becomes profound upon reflection, how the child's simple homemade toy becomes a major event in the person's efforts at self-realization, how the fisherman's knot becomes a link with ancient history, how the farm wife's meal becomes an essay in love. Artifacts richly embody America's divine average. They await your study.

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MATERIAL FOLKLIFE - TEACHER BACKGROUND

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FESTIVALS AND FOLK FESTIVALS

by Susan Kalčík

One place that folklore can be observed and studied is at some kinds of festivals. Certain characteristics of festivals in general make them useful places to perform and present folk culture. For one thing, festivals are very complex events that offer a multiplicity of experiences and presentations and thus often make room for folk as well as popular and classical culture.^{*} For another, festivals are often thought of as times set aside for getting together and celebrating the unity and uniqueness of peoples. They are a time when people agree to suspend for a while the "real world". Thus, people who attend festivals often are in a receptive mood toward new experiences and meeting new people, trying new foods and dances. The people who perform at festivals also often feel that this is a time when it is safe to express differences that might be threatening to others in everyday life. And this is a time when everyone feels it is appropriate not just to do something, but to talk about doing it, or to ask questions about it; the kind of activity people might not have time for during a typical work week.

It is helpful to ask some questions about the particular festival you are attending or planning so that you understand it. Some festivals seem to grow out of the needs or practices of a group such as a religious festival or neighborhood block party. We could call these organic. Others seem to be structured from outside the group such as a festival sponsored by a chamber of commerce to increase tourism or a blue grass festival run by a group of "experts." And many festivals will have some characteristics of both these types. It is also useful to ask who the audience of a festival is. If the event is private in the sense that mainly group members attend, an observer might see a wider range of folk culture but he might not learn as much as he would at a public festival where outsiders were expected to attend and, thus, more active explanation of the folklore would be given. As we have said before, people tend to perform differently depending on whether they view a situation as public or private. We would also want to ask ourselves whether our festival was just a folk festival or whether, as in many ethnic festivals for example, it presents folk, popular and classical cultures side-by-side. If it is a folk festival, then we would ask if the folklore is part of a living tradition, if it is revival, if it is part of people's everyday lives or performed only for festivals.

Whether we are studying or planning a festival, there are important points about the presentation of folklore that we will want to keep in

* See Introduction to Folklore for definitions of folk, popular and classical culture.

FESTIVALS AND FOLK FESTIVALS - TEACHER BACKGROUND

mind. First, what kinds, types, genres of folklore have been selected for presentation? Sometimes only one kind is presented, as in an ethnic festival or a music or craft festival. Others are multidimensional festivals that could include many types and genres. The type of folklore affects the manner of presentation. For example, a large audience is appropriate for a music concert but not appropriate for a craft demonstration that only a few can see and follow.

And in presentation of folk culture we need to remember that a particular piece of folk culture is often part of a whole. The woman demonstrating Polish paper Christmas tree ornaments also knows Polish hymns sung on that holiday, recipes for the appropriate traditional foods and so on. Somehow we will want to learn or suggest the larger context of particular folklore, perhaps by talking about it or by showing pictures of the folk artist in his/her typical setting.

A folklore presentation may be static such as an exhibit, books, films, slides, or it may be dynamic, or live. This type of presentation is what we experience in a concert, demonstration, workshop, participation activity (a dance or craft lesson) and in the attempt to recreate an event, for example, a wedding or celebration.

The presentation of folk cultural materials is not often objective because folk culture is so closely tied to the sense of the folk individual's or group's sense of identity. Because people are in a festive mood and want to have a good time or because of the public setting, folklore presented at festivals will probably avoid negative aspects like ethnic slurs and stereotypes. What is presented at a festival depends a good deal on who is making the decision about what to include and what to leave out. Ask yourself if festival participants are performing what they think you want to hear, what they want you to hear, or what they would perform if only members of their group were present. Many traditional Greek musicians play "Never on Sunday" because non-Greeks think it is part of Greek folklore.

Another aspect of the interpretation of folk culture is the educational attempts made at a festival. Often an important function of a festival is to teach about folk culture, and this is done in introductions, in what people say about their own folklore, and in static presentations such as books and photographs. The amount and quality of teaching depends a good deal on the expertise and experience of the people in charge of a cultural presentation.

The festival event itself is often the end product of a long process. The festival must go through a planning process of some sort, fieldwork if folklorists are involved, selection of participants and folk material, invitation, site preparations (i.e. renting a hall, putting up tents, setting up sound systems and so on), transportation of people and materials, publicity, documentation (on film, video tape, audio tape), and evaluation.

FESTIVALS AND FOLK FESTIVALS - TEACHER BACKGROUND

And one of the most important aspects of folklore presentation, the effects of such a presentation on the audience and participants, cannot be judged until after, perhaps even long after, the festival itself.

PROJECTS YOU MAY WISH TO ASSIGN YOUR STUDENTS

Attend a festival and write a report on it. What was presented, how, who participated, who organized the festival? What was the audience like? What do you think was effective, ineffective? What do you think (or know) the purpose was? Did it achieve its purpose?

Research and attend a particular holiday celebration or festival. Get information on the music, dance, clothes, food, and so on appropriate to that event. Try to learn what the significance of the celebration is to the community that sponsors it.

Report on what you learn at a festival at a demonstration, workshop, oral history or oral narrative session. If you can, ask questions, but also see how much you can learn by observation.

Participate in a festival event such as a dance or craft lesson. Report on what you thought and felt and what you learned. How is the learning process in a participatory festival event different from learning in a classroom or from a book?

Interview a cook, craftsman, or musician who is working at a festival, if they have time. Draw up a list of questions to ask ahead of time. Be sure to let others ask questions too; you can learn from their answers. See attached sample questions. Or interview several members of an ethnic group, occupation, regional group or group of people sharing a similar experience such as immigration to get a sense of what folklore they share.

With your classmates or a group of them design and plan a festival for your class, school or community. What kind of festival will it be? What is (are) its purpose(s)? Who will participate and what will they do? What equipment and supplies will you need? If you can, put on your festival.

FESTIVALS AND FOLK FESTIVALS - TEACHER BACKGROUND

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FESTIVALS AND FOLK FESTIVALS

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

These questions were prepared with the aid of the 7th grade social studies classes of John Ball at Blue Ridge Middle School, Purcellville, Virginia.

CRAFTSPERSON

What is this craft called? Does it have different names?
Where did the craft come from? Who started it? Did it take a long time to develop?
Is it hard to do?
What is the object produced used for? Does it have different uses?
How long does it take to make the object?
What kinds of materials are used? Where do you get them?
What kind of tools are used? Do you have preferences about tools and materials?
Where are you from? When were you born? What places have you lived?
What got you interested in this craft?
How old were you when you learned? How long did it take you to learn?
Who taught you? How? Where?
Did your ancestors do this craft?
How long have you been doing this craft?
Do others in your family, community, area, do this craft? What do they think of it?
Do you make a living with this craft?
Why do you do it? Do you enjoy it?
What affect does this craft have on your life, your family, your community, holidays and celebrations?
Do you do anything special that identifies this piece as your work?
How can you tell a really good piece of work?

MUSICIAN

What kind of music is this?
Where does it come from?
What is its history?
Where, when, and by whom is this music typically played?
How many different sounds does this instrument make? How does it make them?
Is it hard to play?
Did you make this instrument? If not, who did? Where? When?
What instruments do you play? Which do you like the most? Why?
Can I try to play this instrument?
Is it hard to play and sing at the same time?
What is this song about (if it is not in English)? Does it have a special meaning, message or significance.

FESTIVALS AND FOLK FESTIVALS - STUDENT SPRINGBOARD

What are your favorite songs? Your favorite kind of songs? Why do you like them?
How old is this song?
Did you write it? Where did it come from? How did you learn it?
Is this a children's song or one for adults?
Where are you from? When were you born? What other places have you lived?
When and where did you learn? Who taught you? Where and how?
What got you started?
Do you enjoy playing/singing?
Have you ever played/sung before an audience before? Where and when? Is this audience any different from the one you are used to? How?
How long have you played/sung?
Do you write songs/music?
Were you born talented at music?
Do others in your family, community play/sing? What do they think of this music?
Does this music play a part in certain holidays or celebrations?
Do you like or play other kinds of music? What are they?

COOK

Can I have a taste?
Where did this recipe come from? Did you invent it? Was it an old family recipe?
What country did this food originate in?
Has it changed or been adapted to the U.S.? How?
How is it cooked?
How long does it take to prepare?
Where and when is it usually served?
Is it associated with a holiday or celebration?
Where do you get the ingredients? Are any very hard to get?
Are there any special techniques that are difficult to do? Difficult to learn?
Are there easier ways to make this dish? If so, why don't you use them?
How, where, when, from whom did you learn this recipe? Learn to cook?
Did you have to fix dinner when you were young?
Which food or dish do you like to cook best?
Do you like to eat the food you make?
Would you like to do something besides cook?
Do other members of your family and community cook similar foods? What do they think of this kind of food?